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Thank you for inviting our input as you reinvent mental health in Michigan!

Being a danger to yourself or others may determine whether or not someone's behavior is serious enough to warrant treatment in a psychiatric hospital, but for those who may not be suicidal, but: **get caught, don't know "when to back off," don't observe their right to remain silent, whose stories are inconsistent because they can't recall the sequence of events, have difficulty learning from their mistakes and anticipating consequences, don't see how one situation relates to another, who can't tolerate boredom or delay gratification, or want to impress their friends or may be more likely to be taken advantage of or overreact**, their problems can be just as serious. Jail is serious. And in a system of progressive discomfiture, once involved, they get pulled in deeper--*when those who "just have to learn," don't!*

I have been the Chapter Coordinator of CHADD of Grand Rapids, (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), for nineteen years. AD/HD is often a first diagnosis, but if diagnosed accurately, addressed early, and treated effectively, it is more likely to be someone's only diagnosis. Over half continue to be impaired in adulthood.

Peer reviewed research, in recent years, from Sweden, Germany, Norway, Finland, and Canada, and pilot projects in Washington, Delaware, Rhode Island, and Iowa, and a model now being used throughout the UK, all indicate that treating AD/HD reduces rates of crime and recidivism. On average, 70% of juveniles in lock-up and 40% of adults in jails, have AD/HD. In a study in Seattle, Capt. Susan Rahr said treating AD/HD reduced rates of recidivism by 56% in the two years that followed, compared to those who chose not to be treated. In a recent study at Yale, of more than 10,000 adolescents, it was found that they were twice as likely to commit theft (Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics). In a study in Sweden, crime was reduced by 32-41% when AD/HD was treated. Researchers estimate that crimes in which AD/HD is a factor cost the US \$2 billion-\$3 billion dollars.

My own son was diagnosed when he was 3, started on medication at 4, and still takes stimulants for AD/HD as an adult. After he turned 21 and had aged out of our insurance, two weeks after he was no longer on stimulants for AD/HD he committed his first and only crime in the ten years since. I am not excusing what he did, nor would he, but I believe it could have been avoided if he had been treated.

Twelve heads of different organizations met for the first time, August 29th, at the invitation of Laura Sager, the Executive Director of the Citizens' Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending, and Michelle Weemhoff, JD, the Executive Director of the Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency where we discussed AD/HD treatment being able to reduce justice system costs. I provided an overview of the research.

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We would be happy to help reinvent mental health in Michigan!

David Hawkins, the director of a 10 year delinquency study in Seattle, said we need to quit running an expensive ambulance service at the bottom of a cliff, and catch them before they fall.

Though it may seem like treatment would be rewarding bad behavior, we would be preventing it. With AD/HD, playing it safe isn't safe. With some, we only get one chance.

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What it looks like in children without treatment:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpX7RQtw4Ac>

The UK's model:  
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/11/32>

There are forms of medications, now, that would be difficult to abuse. None of the studies I have read have reported diversion of stimulants.

Treatment typically reduces substance abuse by 200-300%:

<http://www.pediatricsdigest.mobi/content/104/2/e20.full>

I have much more I could share, upon request!

Thank you for your time and attention,

*Linda K. Brauer, MSW*

## ADHD Medications Linked to Lower Crime Rates

Psych Central News Editor

By

Reviewed by John M. Grohol, Psy.D. on November 22, 2012

Adults who took commonly prescribed psychiatric medications for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) had significantly less criminal behavior than during periods where they were off of their medication.

This according to researchers at the Karolinska Institutet in Sweden, who looked at over 25,000 people with ADHD during the course of the four-year study.

Commonly prescribed psychiatric medications for ADHD include stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall. Daytrana, Concerta, Dexedrine, Vyvanse, and Strattera are other medications often prescribed for attention deficit disorders.

Previous research has suggested that a person with ADHD is at greater risk for engaging in criminal behavior. Men with ADHD are 37 percent more likely to commit a crime, and among women with ADHD, they are 15 percent more likely to commit a crime.

The new research demonstrates that as long as a person is being successfully treated for their ADHD symptoms with medication, the rates of being convicted of a crime were reduced by 32 to 41 percent, than when they were off their medication for a period of 6 months or more.

Estimates suggest that between 7 to 40 percent of people in the criminal justice system may have ADHD and other similar disorders, though it is often not diagnosed in adults.

Other conclusions drawn by the study are that the observed association is not different between males and females, and applies as much to petty crime as to serious and violent crime.

"We have shown that ADHD medication very probably reduces the risk of crime," says Henrik Larsson, Associate Professor at the Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Karolinska Institutet.

"However, we need to point out that most medical treatments can have adverse side effects, so risks must be weighed up against benefits and the individual patient's entire life situation taken into consideration before medications are prescribed."

"It's said that roughly 30 to 40 percent of long-serving criminals have ADHD," notes co-author Professor Paul Lichtenstein. "If their chances of recidivism can be reduced by 30 percent, it would clearly effect total crime numbers in many societies."

Researchers say the benefits of the drugs must be weighed against harms, but that providing better access to screening for ADHD and treatment may ultimately help reduce crime rates.



Approximately 5 percent of school-aged children and about half as many adults have ADHD. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is characterized by symptoms of inattentiveness, distractedness and impulsivity.

Research has shown that ADHD is a relatively stable condition and many of those who are diagnosed as children also meet the criteria for ADHD as adults. Individuals with ADHD can be treated with stimulant medications, which are thought to act by enhancing alertness and mood and activating the brain which in turn improve attention and impulse control.

The study is published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM).

Source: Karolinska Institutet

#### APA Reference

NewsEditor, P. (2012). ADHD Medications Linked to Lower Crime Rates. *Psych Central*. Retrieved on August 27, 2013, from <http://psychcentral.com/news/2012/11/22/adhd-medications-linked-to-lower-crime-rates/48083.html>